



Water Resources Division's Aquatic Invasive Species of the Week!

FOR THE WEEK OF:

June 24-30, 2013

Eurasian Ruffe

Gymnocephalus cernuus

Origin: Northern Europe and Asia

Means of Introduction: Possibly via ballast water. First discovered in Duluth, MN in mid-1980s.

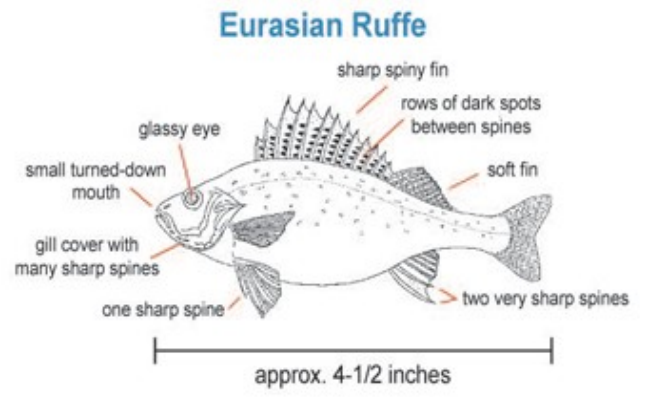
Distribution: Rivers and bays along Lake Superior, Little and Big Bay de Nocs near Escanaba, and in Thunder Bay near Alpena, MI.

Impacts: Outcompetes with native species, in particular yellow perch and emerald shiners.



Photo: Doug Jensen, Minnesota Sea Grant, Bugwood.org

Description: Head lacks scales, very slimy when handled. Body similar to that of a perch. Check out the MI DNR's illustration to see more distinguishing features! →



Similar species: Perch. The difference is the Eurasian ruffe has a continuous dorsal fin and lacks scales on its head.

Habitat: Turbid lakes with soft bottoms and little or no vegetation. Also rivers with slow current.

Interesting features: Eurasian ruffe have a glassy eye or what's called a "Tapetum lucidum" which helps the fish see in low light conditions- making it an even better competitor with native fish. It also spends daylight hours in deeper waters and moves to shallower areas to feed during the night.



Photo: Gary Cholwek, USGS, Bugwood.org

For more information on the Eurasian ruffe and other aquatic invasive species, please visit the Michigan DEQ's website: www.michigan.gov/deq/ or Sea Grant Michigan at www.miseagrant.umich.edu/